

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, today I rise in support of the amendment offered by the Senator from Rhode Island, Mr. REED. Characteristic of him, it is a thoughtful solution to a very serious problem related to the funding of our national security needs.

I would like to support and salute Senator REED for his outstanding job. Many don't realize that Senator JACK REED is a graduate of West Point. He served in the U.S. military, bringing that breadth of his considerable background to additional public service, both in the House and now in the Senate. He is the ranking member on the defense authorization committee and also serves in great capacity on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee.

Now, let us talk about the Reed amendment and the funding for the Department of Defense. I want to be very clear. I do want to support funding for the national security of the United States of America. We take an oath to defend the Constitution against all enemies foreign and domestic, and we must uphold that oath not only with lip service but with real money in the real Federal checkbook. We need to do it in a way that doesn't use gimmicks or smoke and mirrors to end sequester or to finesse or do a shell deal behind the budget caps.

Remember, we passed a bill that does have significant budget caps. But the way to deal with that problem is not to cap the Department of Defense but to be honest about what it takes to fund national security. The Reed amendment does that. It makes clear that the Department of Defense should receive \$38 billion, but in its base budget to take care of the troops, to protect the troops while they protect us, to make sure they have the right gear, the right equipment, the right technology, and also the right intelligence to be able to do their job. The Reed amendment also looks out for military families. It does what we need to do.

Only when there is a new budget agreement that increases the defense budget as well as the budget for domestic programs will we be able to solve the problem that is facing us.

Now, what our generals have told us is we cannot meet our defense needs with the current budget caps. They also say: Senator—this is General Dempsey, and this is General Odierno, who spoke so well at the funeral of the Vice President's son on Saturday; these men have devoted their lives to the defense of our country and to have the best military in the world—don't give us sequester. Instead of figuring out how to fight terrorism, we have to figure out how to fight the stupidity of Congress.

Now, they do not use those words; I am using those words. When we instituted sequester, it was a technique to force us to make the tough decisions. We keep hiding behind the technique. We need to change that. The bill we have now raises funding for something called the overseas contingency fund

by \$38 billion, but it uses it to fund activities that should be in the base bill rather than the war cost it was intended for. Essentially, it is a budget gimmick.

What is the overseas contingency fund? It was meant to be a line item where we could actually see what war costs us. In Afghanistan and Iraq it was kind of commingled through a lot of the other items related to defense, but we didn't know the actual cost of the war. OCO is meant for war. It is not meant to be a way to avoid the budget caps. Instead of just raising the caps and funding DOD at the needed level, this bill uses this gimmick, so nothing about it is really in the national interest.

Our military leaders tell us: No. 1, get rid of sequester. No. 2, you must increase the base bill.

Defense budgeting cannot be done on a year-to-year basis. It must be multiyear because it is for the planning of procurement for them to have the best weapons systems. It is recruitment and training and sustaining of the military and their personnel needs.

Defense Secretary Ash Carter said: "Our defense industry partners, too, need stability and longer-term plans, not end-of-year crises." GEN Dan Allyn, Army Vice Chief of Staff, said: "OCO does not give you the predictable funding to be able to plan the force we are going to need."

I want to make another point. The defense of the United States doesn't lie only with DOD. That is our warfighting machine. But we have other programs that are related to national security that come out of domestic discretionary spending that are shortchanged and are shrinking and, quite frankly, I am concerned about it.

What am I talking about? In order to have national security, you need to have a State Department. You need to have a State Department to do the kind of work that involves diplomacy. That involves working with nations around the world and the needs of these nations and also to engage in important negotiations such as we have now ongoing on the Iran nuclear. That is not done by generals. That is done by diplomats. You need to have a Department of State. Look at what happened in Benghazi, where there is so much focus on this. While they are focusing—and we should focus—on Benghazi, we appropriators are focusing on embassy security. Embassy security is funded through the Department of State and funded by discretionary spending. If you want to protect Americans overseas, you have to have embassy security. You have to have a Department of State.

Then we have the Department of Homeland Security. Look at all the cyber attacks on us right at this minute. We need to have a cyber component to defense, but we need to have the cyber defense strategy at the Department of Homeland Security. Even our military is being hacked. Insurance

programs are being hacked. People in the United States are having important information about their health records, their Social Security numbers, and so on being stolen. We need to have a robust Department of Homeland Security. They have a program called Einstein that is supposed to do it, but we don't have to be Einsteins to know that in order to protect America we also have to protect the Department of Homeland Security.

Then of course there are the promises made and promises kept. There is the Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies. We must fund our promises made to our veterans. That is out of discretionary spending. That is not out of defense. But the infrastructure for our military, our military bases here in our own country, come out of military construction.

I don't want to sound as if I am defending government programs. That is not what I am here to do. I am here to defend the Nation and defend it the right way. We need to be able to put money in the Federal checkbook that funds our Department of Defense without gimmicks, without sleight of hand, without finessing or playing dodge ball. We have to play hard ball with the terrorists and others who have predatory intent against the United States.

We have to be Team U.S.A. not only on the sports field but on this playing field right here on the floor of Congress. Let us work together. Let us get a new budget agreement. Let us solve the problems. Let us end sequester. Let us work together to be able to do it. I believe a big step forward would be supporting the amendment offered by the Senator from Rhode Island, Mr. REED. I ask, in the interest of national security, that we vote for the Reed amendment and that we go to the budget. Let's go to the negotiating table and come up with a real framework to fund the compelling needs of our Nation, and let's do it, Team U.S.A.

I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:41 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

AMENDMENT NO. 1486

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, this Chamber is currently having a very important debate about our national security priorities, including the authorized funding levels for our Nation's Armed Forces. But I would like to